ESTIMATED TIME 15 MIN

Parts of an Ecosystem

GROUPING

individuals

MATERIALS PER STUDENT

flash cards

OBJECTIVE

Students will identify the parts of an ecosystem.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

An ecosystem or ecological system is a system of relationships between living organisms in an area. These relationships can be between living organisms or living organisms and their environment.

An ecosystem contains biotic factors and abiotic factors. The abiotic factors include all the nonliving factors that have an impact on the biotic factors, such as water, air, temperature, nutrients, and sunlight.

The biotic factors are the living organisms in that ecosystem. They can be classified into individuals, a population, and a community. The sum of all the ecosystems on Earth is the biosphere. A biosphere is considered the parts that have life.

MATERIALS

flash cards

Parts of an Ecosystem

Ask a question: What are the parts of an ecosystem?

1. **Observe** the flash cards.

2. Identify the population, community, and the ecosystem on each card.

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SCIENCE SKILLS

By the end of this practice, students will have used the following science skills:
- Observe
- Record data
- Communicate

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY

Use the Multiple Intelligence Activity for this lesson to enrich and engage the different learning styles of each student.

3 Record your observations.

Card	Population	Community	Ecosystem
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

4 Communicate

What are the differences between a population and a community?

_____

_____

_____

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_____

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EXPECTED RESULTS

A deer is an individual, but a group of deer is a population. A group of different animals is a community. A group of living organisms and the nonliving factors in their environment is an ecosystem.

EXPLANATION

Each ecosystem includes abiotic and biotic factors that interact.

CONCLUSION

An ecosystem is a complex system of interrelationships between its biotic and abiotic parts.

STEPS

1 Introduce students to the activity by reviewing parts of an ecosystem. Have students **observe** the flash cards.

2 Guide students to identify and name the animals on each card. Encourage them to identify populations, communities, and ecosystems on the cards.

ASK *Is a deer a population?*
Possible answer: No, a deer is an individual.
Is a deer a community?
Possible answer: No, but a group of deer is a population.

3 Have students record their observations in the table.
Possible answers:

Cards	Population	Community	Ecosystem
1	deer	deer, grass, other animals	tundra
2	fish	fish, coral	ocean
3	snakes	snakes, cactus, plants, other animals	desert
4	sheep	sheep, dog, lake, grass	grassland

4 **Communicate.** Encourage students to share their results. Lead them to identify and recognize the difference between a community and a population.
Possible answers:
A population consists of all members of the same kind that live in one place at the same time.
A community consists of all living things that live in the same place.

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